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Shultz, House at Odds on Cambodia Arms Aid

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KHAO I DANG, Thailand—Secretary of State George P. Shultz, touring the embattled Cambodian-Thai border here Tuesday, refused to respond to pleas from displaced Cambodians for direct U.S. military aid to oust Vietnamese occupation forces from their country.

But in Washington, the House on Tuesday approved an amendment that would give \$5 million in military aid to the rebels, with the exception of the Communist Khmer Rouge. The Senate has approved similar aid to the non-Communist resistance.

In his tour, Shultz was confronted by such signs as "We Have the Manpower, We Need Arms and Education," that was held by some of the 53,000 Cambodians at so-called Site 7 near here. Many of these refugees slip back across the border, through rice paddies and over hazy low hills just a few miles away, to fight the Vietnamese.

"Your visit is a momentous occasion in the history of the resistance," Site 7's administrative head, Thou Thon, said in welcoming Shultz. "You give us hope to carry on our battle against the cruel Vietnamese invaders. Your visit, we hope, marks America's commitment to the plight of our people."

Thou Thon's hope was not shared by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, leader of the three-party Cambodian rebel coalition seeking to oust the Vietnamese from the Southeast Asian state. Speaking at a press conference Tuesday in Peking where he is in exile, Sihanouk said the rebels will not succeed in ousting the Vietnamese and that the country will in "one or two decades" become a province of Vietnam.

He said Vietnam will never accept proposals endorsed by the non-Communist six-nation Assn. of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which ended its annual meeting Tuesday in Kuala Lumpur,

Malaysia. The meeting was held by the foreign ministers of ASEAN—Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei, Thailand and the Philippines.

Vietnam has rejected ASEAN's call for negotiations between Hanoi and Sihanouk's coalition.

Shultz refused to endorse direct military aid for the rebels, including the move in Congress to provide \$5 million for that purpose.

The House action approving the \$5 million aid to the rebels was in an amendment to the proposed \$13.1 billion foreign aid bill.

The Khmer Rouge, one of the three parties in the Sihanouk coalition, has been blamed for killing up to 3 million Cambodians during its harsh rule under Pol Pot from 1975 to 1979 when it was driven from power by the Vietnamese.

Rep. Stephen J. Solarz (D-N.Y.), sponsor of the amendment, said that aid to the non-Communist rebels might help prevent the Khmer Rouge from returning to power if the Vietnamese are forced out of Cambodia.

Shultz, in his meeting with Thou Thon said: "We have great admiration and respect for what you are doing." He cited various forms of U.S. aid: \$28 million to help refugees, \$8 million for affected Thai villages and almost \$100 million a year in military aid to Thailand, whose own security is threatened by the Vietnamese attacks on the rebel camps.

"But the least of our response is tangible financial assistance," Shultz told the Cambodians. "There is also the human response and the spiritual response to your problem, which is very deeply and widely held in our country."

At a Bangkok press conference later, he similarly refused to endorse direct military aid. He also refused to comment on reports that the CIA provides about \$5 million a year to the non-Communist Cambodian rebels through Thai channels.